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Alternative Behavioral Interventions Revisited: Which Approach, for Which children, With What Resources?"
Chair: Philip N. Hineline (Temple University)
Discussant: Gina Green (Association of Professional Behavior Analysts)
For Which Children, Which Approach? EMILY B. BISEN-HERSH (Temple University), Betsy Wurstner Swope (Temple University)
Abstract: Rate of skill development is a hallmark concern for effective autism treatment approaches. Data were collected from 53 children with autism between ages 3-7 years, who were receiving Early Intensive Behavioral Interventions within public school classrooms. Classrooms were self-identified as using a traditional Lovaas-derived, Applied Verbal Behavior, or Competent Learner Model (CLM) approach to instruction. Assessments every six-months included the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, the Brigance Inventory of Early Development-II, the Behavioral Language Assessment Form, and (annually), the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence. To compensate for uneven sample sizes between approaches, a baseline composite score was created in order to match students from each approach on the bases of baseline performance of academic, language, and social skills. This measure was then used to compare overall rate of learning among these intervention groups, as assessed by slopes defined by each child's successive scores. Statistical findings indicated a significantly higher rate of learning academic and language skills for children in CLM classrooms, compared to the other two approaches. This effect was enhanced when only children with low baseline composite scores were considered. These results support further evaluation of CLM as an effective approach to autism treatment.

Which Approach: How Different Are They? ELIZABETH R. LORAH (Temple University), John C. Barnard (ABC Consultants LLC)
Abstract: Literature on the methods of Lovass-Derived Instruction (DTI), Applied Verbal Behavior (AVB), and the Component Learner Model (CLM) specify classroom practices that identify them as distinct intervention models. To assess whether these approaches remain distinct when implemented in public schools, data from teacher interviews, direct observation, and analyses of 53 participants' individualized curricula were collected in 10 DTI, 11 AVB, and 4 CLM classrooms. The collected data included curriculum sequencing and instructional techniques (i.e., error correction strategies, data collection methods, behavior intervention strategies, antecedent stimulus presentation, and methods of curriculum development), which enabled an analysis of the categorization and sequencing of each participant's individualized curriculum. Data collected through teacher interviews and direct observation of the classrooms revealed differences between the literature's specified principles and the actual practices within sites claiming to employ the DTI model, indicating practices similar to those characteristic of

AVB. Alternatively, sites self-identified with the AVB model remained fairly consistent with the literature-specified characteristics. Data from CLM sites revealed several unique strategies used within the classrooms, thus making them distinct from both the DTI and the AVB sites. The analysis of each participant's individualized curriculum demonstrated little variability in curriculum sequences.

Program Resources: Components That Contribute to Staff Performance in Alternative Behavioral Internventions ABBI CAMPBELL (Temple University), Kelly McElrath (Temple University), Jennifer A. Wade (Temple University)
Abstract: In an attempt to identify characteristics of teaching staff that are most important to overall staff performance, data were collected during a 3-year project in which various components of 3 alternative behavioral interventions for students with autism spectrum disorder were compared. To determine the effectiveness of staff implementation of each intervention, 105 instructional staff members, including teachers and paraprofessionals, from Lovaas-derived classrooms, verbal behavior classrooms, and Competent Learner Model classrooms were recruited to participate in the project. Measures of the implementation of specific teaching procedures, conceptual expertise, pertinent background information, and staffing stability of participants from each behavioral intervention were evaluated to discover whether specific resources would be correlated with the effectiveness of a given intervention. While some aspects of the analysis were inconclusive, it appears that level of education and background knowledge in a relevant field of study have a stronger impact on both procedural proficiency and conceptual expertise than does overall experience. Despite this finding, there was minimal evidence that initial conceptual expertise is predictive of performance, regardless of the intervention.